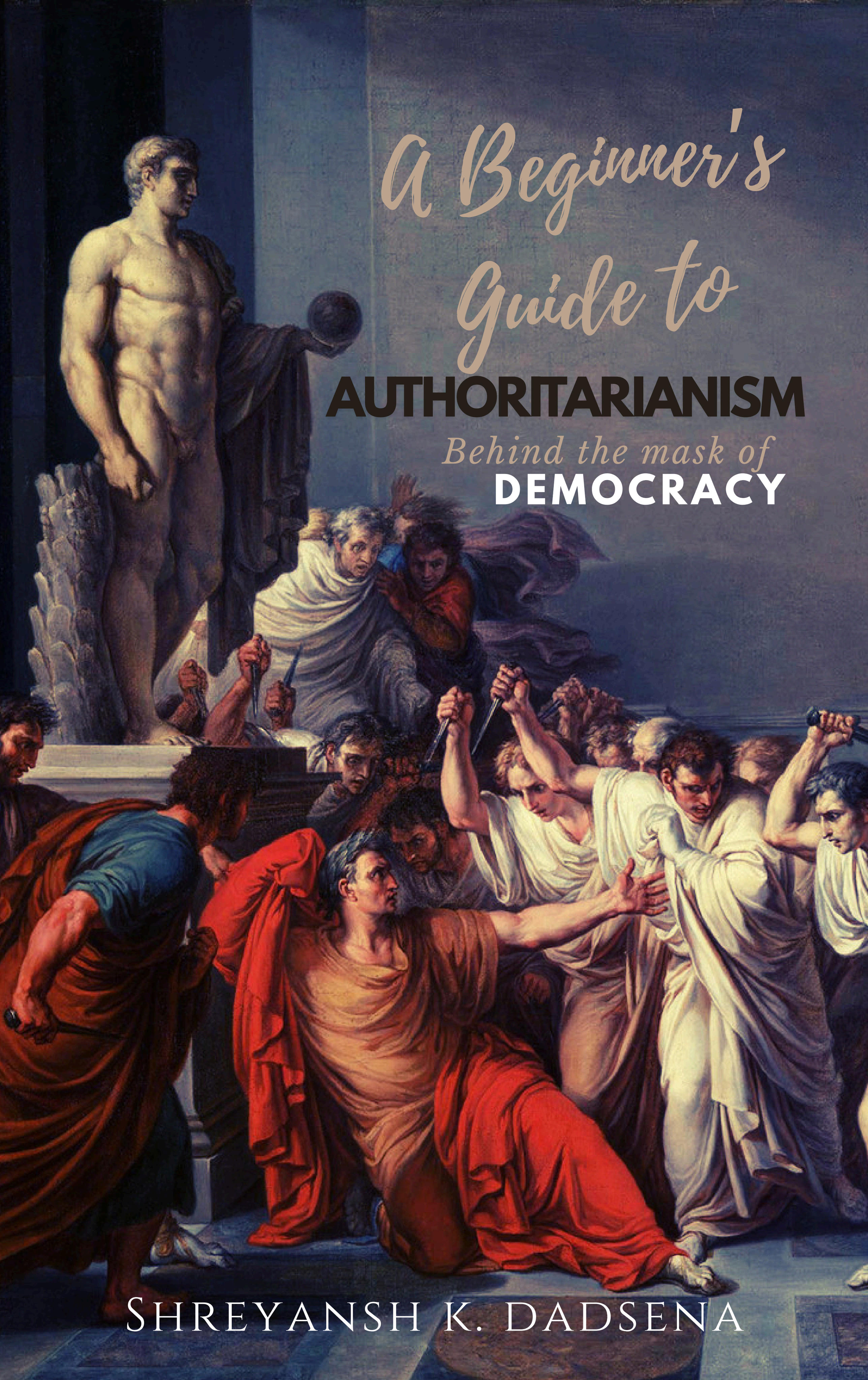
A Beginner's Guide to

AUTHORITARIANISM

Behind the mask of

DEMOCRACY



SHREYANSH K. DADSENA

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This is a Work of a Human.

A frog in a well thinks the well is the whole world.

The walls prefer it that way.

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WHAT MAKES A NATION DEMOCRATIC?

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What makes a Nation Democratic?

Constitution doesn't Guarantee Democracy but only the possibility for democracy.

STEP - 1

History Tells us that Power is maintained only when the people being Governed believe they are completely free.

Ofcourse they will have Rights or they will think they do,

The Right to Vote
The Right to Speak
The Right to take their Partner out for Dinner

Freedom can't be measured only by the existence of Choices but whether those choices are meaningful.

The People never give up thier liberties but under some delusion.

- Edmund Burke

The most stable form of control is one that is not recognized as control.
You will enjoy various Constitutional powers such as Sedition laws when someone criticizes your flaws and tries to be a whistleblower to your Authoritarian Government, You have Secrets laws(Undisclosed sensitive information) which are a great tool to avoid transparency and accountability.

a theory by german political scientist
lizabeth noel newman 1974.

WHAT?
the increasing pressure that people feel to suppress their opinions and views when they believe they belong to the minority.

WHY?
the most important component of the spiral of silence is
the fear of social isolation. most people are afraid of becoming isolated from their environment.

this fear of isolation functions as a motivational trigger for the whole process and sets the spiral into motion.

in order to avoid being isolated people try to observe their surroundings and they try to figure out which opinions and behaviours prevail.

HOW?
in order to indicate the individual's awareness of his social environment, noel newman introduced the concept of the quasi-statistical sense, a sense used to gauge public opinion.

People do not always change their opinions. Sometimes they simply stop expressing them.

"*The further a society drifts from the truth, the more it will hate those who speak it.*"

-George Orwell

"Spiral of Silence" the theory developed by Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann gave the idea that People who believe their opinion is unpopular often remain silent to avoid social isolation. Their silence makes the dominant opinion appear even more dominant, encouraging even more people to remain silent. Over time, a perception of consensus emerges, even when significant disagreement still exists.

For instance;
A student hesitates to question a popular narrative in a classroom.
A journalist avoids a story that may attract criticism.
A professor chooses a safer topic.
A public servant remains silent despite private concerns.

For those seeking power, this is a remarkably useful phenomenon. A government does not need every citizen to agree with it. It merely needs enough citizens to believe that everyone else agrees.

STEP - II

CREATE AN ENEMY

A Man is not only known by his friends but also by his enemies.
Once people are convinced they are free, they must be have something to fear
Every authoritarian movement requires an "Other" a group against which the majority can define itself.
An Enemy could be anybody or anything...

A Particular Race, A Commune or the best enemy to create is a Nation.

A neigbouring Country
A Developing nation just like yours with Similar problems and is slightly worse.
Compare down, not up
If they score 2 out of 10, convince your people that 3 out of 10 is a triumph.

If you can convince the lowest white man he's better than the best colored man, he won't notice you're picking his pocket.

— Lyndon B. Johnson

When unemployment rises, remind citizens that theirs is higher.
Point to a bigger controversy elsewhere when misconduct becomes visible. Look for instances of even greater public service failures throughout the frontier.
A neighboring nation can be used as a suitable standard if it has weak institutions, inadequate infrastructure, unemployment, and corruption. A comparison can be used to counter any complaint, such as "At least we are better than them."

Thus, the definition of success subtly shifts. Excellence is no longer the aim. Avoiding shame becomes the main objective.
Because the roads in another country are in even worse shape, a road with lots of potholes is accepted. A faltering economy is praised because it is more difficult than someone else's. A scandal is written off because it occurred somewhere else.

Your Nation will have more Trophies than them in World Games and Your Nation is Slightly better in terms of Infrastructure, thier Government is Corrupt, Judicial proceedings are politically influenced, So is yours but the narrative should remain “At least we are better than them”, As long as the benchmark remains a struggling neighbor rather than a prosperous democracy, mediocrity can be presented as success.

Divide and Rule

If your Nation has a Heterogenous Population which in this context means, two or more than two Communities existing that's a plus point.
Communal tensions are particularly useful because they transform political disagreements into emotional conflicts. Facts become less important than identity.
This Formula is not new it has existed since ages and a range of Authoritarian Governments and Colonial powers have benefited from it.

Social Engineering

Social engineering begins when governments stop asking what society wants and start deciding what society should become.
In Sociological context, it is the deliberate shaping of public attitudes, identities, and behaviors through institutions, education, media, incentives, and political narratives.
This is necessary to maintain Political control over Diverse populations.
A voter who believes their community is under threat may remain loyal regardless of performance.

The Tactic is simple Advocate for the majority community and enjoy loyal voters.

STEP - III

CAPTURE THE INSTITUTIONS

Own The Press

Whether Directly or indirectly you have to establish total control over the Press and various mediums for mass communication.
Press is the watchdog of Democracy, throw some biscuits at them.
Press not only includes newspapers but all the other electronic medias and broadcast authorities.
They are the greatest weapon to shape
"Public Opinion".
In the year 1922 Walter Lippmann an American Journalist wrote a highly influential book "Public Opinion".
Walter Lippmann questioned the assumption that citizens are always well-informed enough to make complex political decisions. He believed modern societies depend heavily on experts and institutions to interpret information.

According to the step flow theory;
The theory argues that media messages usually do not influence most people directly.
Instead, information flows in two steps:
Media → Opinion Leaders
Opinion Leaders → General Public

Media Ownership should be in your hands,
Opinion leaders will do the rest of the Job
if your country consists of Public media Ownership;
Great- No extra work just communicate fabricated stories and avoid broadcasting on Sensitive issues which are not suited for your interests.
No Projection of your mistakes only the opponent's.
Self-presentation should be Heroic.

if your country consists of Private, Public and Cross media ownership;
Great- Not a problem, If the media can be bought, it doesn't need to be regulated. If it can be intimidated, there is no need to buy it. If it can be made dependent, it doesn't need to be scared.

Agenda-Setting

The theory developed by Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw following their study of the 1968 United States presidential election.
The Core idea was,
The media may not be very successful in telling people what to think, but it is remarkably successful in telling people what to think about.
In other words, media organizations influence the public agenda by deciding which issues receive attention and which do not.

Obviously your nation faces Inflation, Unemployment, Corruption, Border tensions, Celebrity scandals.

If television channels spend 80% of their coverage discussing border tensions, people may begin to view border tensions as the nation's most important issue, even if inflation or unemployment affects their daily lives more directly.
The media has not necessarily told people what opinion to hold about the issue. It has influenced which issue occupies their attention.

This is a classic agenda-setting effect: attention is redirected without necessarily changing the underlying facts.

Make Law Enforcement Directorates and Investigation Bureaus your puppets

The most effective way to weaken accountability is not to destroy institutions but to capture them.
They should be instrumental to the Government rather than the Law.
Keep the anti-corruption agencies. Keep the investigative bureaus. Keep the regulatory bodies. Keep the watchdogs.
Just make sure they bark at the right people.

Cases involving allies proceed more slowly than those involving opponents. While some files get urgent attention, others are left to collect dust.

Just be carefull to take Actions at politically sensitive moments. Before elections, During major parliamentary debates.

When a political opponent gains popularity
Even if a case has merit, timing can create the perception that the agency is being used as a political tool.

Use them wisely, dig up;

Past criminal records
Old closed and pending civil cases
Tax Violations
Link to White collar crime such as Corporate Fraud
Money Laundering Networks

If you find a Opponent which is a Potential threat or can be in future to your Government, just link that individual to one of the above mentioned things and watch him/her exercise in the Judicial treadmill.

Ideological Gatekeeping in Higher Education

Universities do more than award degrees.
National Universities formulate opinions which frequently become policies
and narratives.

They produce future administrators, journalists, teachers, lawyers, scientists, and political leaders. Whoever influences higher education influences the ideas that shape future generations.

Appointment of Academic Heads(Vice-Chancellors, Directors and Governing heads) as someone who supports your ideology or in simple words is “Your guy”.

Ideological alignment, political loyalty, or community affiliations over academic independence.
The objective is rarely to control every classroom.
It is to influence the environment in which ideas are produced, debated, rewarded, and discouraged.

Control Film Censorship

When i tell people i've read a thousand books i am an intellectual, but when i tell them i've watched a thousand films suddenly i am unemployed.

Of all the Arts, for us the Cinema is the Most Important.

-Vladimir Lenin

In a Society where people believe Books to be primary source of education and films to be merely entertainment, is a society where people can be fooled easily.

The Greatest Example of how films can be a great tool to maintain Authority and Jusify your acts is of none other than Adolf Hitler.

Under the leadership of Joseph Goebbels, the German film industry was brought under state influence. Goebbels understood that audiences resist obvious propaganda but willingly absorb messages through entertainment.

Films tend to evoke those emotions in an individual which can't be expressed so easily but to simply put, Hate or Prejudice for a Particular Community/race/nation.

Antonio Gramsci argued that power is maintained not only through force but through culture.
According to this perspective, films can normalize particular ideas about patriotism, nationalism, enemies, heroes, history, and citizenship until those ideas begin to feel like common sense rather than ideology.
The most successful propaganda does not feel like propaganda.
It feels natural.

How to create The Perfect Propaganda;

Propaganda that works best doesn't ask people to endorse a certain policy. It asks individuals to emotionally connect with a story that makes the policy seem heroic, vital, or inevitable.

- Censor other filmmaker's Films (especially the one's who expose too much reality)

Cut those scenes where such truth is being exposed and label the film obscene, Violent and inappropriate for audiences
Disturbs Social harmony is the perfect reason to deny certifcation or Bann such film

- Let the Audience crave for R rated Content

Only allow Foreign films to showcase a bit of Profanity and strong language, just a little bit of nudity and Violence but completely censor indegenious films with such content.

- Find the perfect filmmaker.

Leni Riefenstahl Known for influential propaganda films used to make successfull films during the Nazi Regime.
You will need someone who enjoys filmmaking and can subtly include propaganda in their films.

- Final step is to finance the Greatest Propaganda

The film has to be Grand no restraints for the Budget, no restrictions for Portrayal of Violence, no restrictions on the use of Profanity and statements made on Controversial subjects.
Justify your mistakes of the past or any recent actions which the nation's population has no clue about and Project them as it was an action done for National Interest.

Boom, there you have it,
The Perfect Propaganda

Even if a part of the population understands that there is false or exaggerated information and ideas, they still can't ignore how good the film is.

The money invested in the film will give infact greater returns as the audience was craving to see a man with an AK-47 rifle wipe out 12 members in a house creatively using that strong language which the audience hasn't heard since a long time in the Theatres.

The film's Antagonist will be the neighbouring enemy Nation and the Protagonist will be...You.

STEP - IV

DISTRIBUTE BREAD & HOST CIRCUSES

give them bread and circuses and they will never revolt.

-Juvenal

Since the Ancient times it is advised to keep the people fed and occupied.
The formula has been the same for more than two thousand years.
Ancient Rome had Gladiator Arenas where people would see men killing each other brutally and they used to actually enjoy that, Emperors and rulers themselves would host it and reward the winner themselves.
A Population may become satisfied with survival when it should be demanding Prosperity.
Just as how a loaf of bread can substitute for a full meal.

To have a better understanding let me tell you how this will work and belive me it does...

There are basically two aspects to this;
Clientelism and Catharsis

Clientelism

In simple words it refers to a system where Political support is exchanged for material benefits.
Socio-Political Theorists have named this kind of politics “Patronage Politics”

Material benefits can be in various forms;

Free or near-free ration provided to eligible households.

Monthly/Quarterly/Annual Subsidies.

A small monthly cash transfer deposited directly into the bank account of a woman in every eligible household.

Through this the Principle remains the same, ensure immediate needs while maintaining public support.
Free rations may relieve hunger, but they will not solve the deeper problems that created poverty in the first place.
Secure Political loyalty without addressing deeper structural problems.

Catharsis

Catharsis is the process of releasing strong emotions, such as anger, frustration, fear, sadness, or excitement, through an activity, experience, or expression, resulting in a feeling of emotional relief.

At the modern era the Gladiator arenas have been substituted with Stadiums and fights have been substituted with Games.
The stadium provides catharsis. The citizen enters burdened by daily struggles and leaves emotionally exhausted but temporarily relieved. The problems remain, but the frustration has been released.
The Frustration that might otherwise be direct towards critical Political questions.

For a few hours, anger finds an outlet.
The crowd shouts.
The crowd celebrates.
The crowd forgets.

Bread and Circuses (Panem et Circenses) is till date the best formula to public satisfaction and reduce Political unrest.
The key to mass appeasement and distraction.

A citizen asks how to improve the nation.

A spectator asks who won the match.

STEP - V

44 years before the birth of Jesus Christ there lived a Man.
You certainly might have heard of Caesar, but what do you know about him...
Who exactly was this Julius Caesar?
A Roman Consul?
A Military Genius who defeated Pompey The Great?
or
The Man who dated Cleopatra?
or maybe
The Man after whom the month of July is named?

He was all of this but most importantly Caesar was a man with ambition.
Many ambitious men could only dream of what Julius Caesar accomplished.
He gained enormous popularity, conquered new lands, vanquished opponents, and consolidated hitherto unheard of authority in his own hands. He was the most powerful man in Rome by 44 BCE.

And after that, he was Murdered.
The Most famous Killing in History.
Not by Foreign Enemies as in his time few men possessed the military strength to challenge him. Not by army invasion as everyone thought it was nearly impossible to defeat him in Warfare.
but by those in his own political social class.

Ambitious monarchs would learn from Caesar's demise that power is insufficient on its own for ages.

We need to secure power.

The conspirators thought they were preserving the Roman Republic when they assassinated Caesar. Rather, they aided in its destruction. Rome would become an empire under Augustus in less than a generation.

Future Historians would Study Caesar's Victories. Future Dictators would study Caesar's Assasination.

1st Mistake

Don't build Your Own statues

As his victories accumulated, so too did his confidence. Statues in his honor appeared throughout Rome. His image was displayed in public places. He accepted unprecedented honors and titles. To many Romans, Caesar no longer behaved like a servant of the Republic but like a monarch in all but name.

This view was hazardous.

The Romans took great satisfaction in their distaste for monarchy, as their previous emperor had been deposed almost five centuries prior. Not only was a monarch unpopular, but he also represented oppression.

Caesar's ambition was seen by many senators as having outgrown the Republic.

It seemed impossible to defeat him in open combat. Caesar was incredibly popular with the general populace and commanded a great deal of loyalty from his Soldiers. Caesar would probably win another civil war, just like the last one.

Caesar would need to be faced elsewhere if he could not be eliminated on the battlefield.

Inside the Senate's walls.

The Curia of Pompey, a Senate chamber connected to the Theatre of Pompey, was selected by the conspirators. Caesar would meet his fate there, surrounded by men he regarded as colleagues.

2nd Mistake

Don’t Trust Old enemies

Julius Caesar thought that victory could turn enemies into allies.

It was perhaps his biggest flaw as well as one of his greatest assets.

Caesar was renowned for his policy of clemency, in contrast to many conquerors. He frequently welcomed defeated opponents back into public life and pardoned them. Former adversaries were permitted to retain their wealth, social standing, and occasionally even political clout.

Caesar thought mercy would create Loyalty.

Many of the men who surrounded him following the Civil War had previously opposed him. Caesar's ascent had cost them battles, authority, and influence. Despite their public reconciliation, some people never came to terms with the new political landscape.

Among them were senators who believed that the Republic itself was in danger due to Caesar's increasing authority.

The lesson is not that forgiveness is a mistake.
The lesson is that political surrender does not always mean ideological surrender.
An opponent may accept defeat while still waiting for a chance to reverse it.

3rd Mistake

Sometimes listen to your Astrologer

A man who has overcome so much can begin to believe he is untouchable.
Ancient sources such as Plutarch and Suetonius tell us that a night before the Ides of March, Caesar went to see a seer named Spurinna who warned Caesar of impending danger.
As She asked Caesar to bring a Sacrificial Goat but was missing of an Heart which she told Caesar is bad Omen. Other stories describe unsettling dreams that produced alarming signs.
Even Caesar's wife nearly begged him to not attend the senate meeting.
But was convinced by Decimus, an old friend who persuaded Caesar to not skip the meeting for such superstitious reasons.
The Biggest lesson we can learn from Caesar's mistakes is not to trust anyone including allies blindly and eleminate old enemies.

The problem was never that Caesar didn't listen to his Astrologer but he trusted the reassurance of the man who was one of main Conspirator.

Caesarism was almost perfect and could've lasted way longer, but Caesar was grown too powerfull and became inconsiderate.

John P. Balsdon in his book Historia: Zeitschrift fur Alte Geschite writes;

"If an authoritarian government was to be established successfully in the Republic's place, it must not be, like Caesar's, an inconsiderate, careless frank authoritarianism; it must wear a republican mask, however false"

You learn these lessons from his mistakes however you will learn from your own experiences no matter how much you study others.
As Caesar once quoted
" Experience is the teacher of all things"

STEP - VI

WIN EVERY ELECTION

The Ethical Way

Authoritarian movements rarely abolish elections.
They prefer to win them.
Elections make whatever's going on in a Country look Legitimate.

Accelerate visible development projects in the year preceding the election

Long Delayed Infrastructural projects have to be accelerated, give the citizens something which is visible for them to vote for.

Reduce Scandals and Contentious Government actions an year preceding the election

If one of your Minister's Son kills someone in a drink and drive incident just before the lections or during elections let him go to Prison as maintaining power is the priority.

Flood the public sphere with campaign messaging highlighting achievements and future promises

Flooding Digital spaces such as Social media is a great way to shape opinions and reach majority as, trolling the opposition candidates and highlighting your small achievements repeatedly.

The Unethical Way

I mean you have to maintain power right...

Vote-buying
A traditional way to capture votes is by material inducements it includes Cash, Alcohol, Fuel or any other gifts.
It is Constitutionally considered a crime as its bribery in election but it's not a democracy anyway.

Coercion
The creation of an atmosphere of fear around political participation.
This includes intimidation and threats but doesn't work well as no one except the voters themself only know who they voted.

Ad Hominem
(Latin for "to the person") is a logical fallacy
Personal attacks designed to discredit opponents rather than engage with their arguments.
Works better than the above mentioned methods.

Manipulating voter registration processes
This one is simple.
Remove the names of that specific population of voters who won't vote you.

CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR NEW DEMOCRACY

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